

A bill for an act
relating to public safety; creating pilot program for driver's license reinstatement
diversion for individuals charged with driving without valid license.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **LICENSE REINSTATEMENT DIVERSION PILOT PROGRAM.**

Subdivision 1. Establishment. An eligible city may establish a license reinstatement diversion pilot program for holders of class D drivers' licenses who have been charged with violating Minnesota Statutes, section 171.24, subdivision 1 or 2, but have not yet entered a plea in the proceedings. An individual charged with driving after revocation under Minnesota Statutes, section 171.24, subdivision 2, is eligible for diversion only if the revocation was due to a violation of Minnesota Statutes, section 169.791; 169.797; 169A.52; 169A.54; or 171.17, subdivision 1, paragraph (a), clause (6). An individual who is a holder of a commercial driver's license or who has committed an offense in a commercial motor vehicle is ineligible for participation in the diversion pilot program.

Subd. 2. Eligible cities. Each of the cities of Duluth, St. Paul, South St. Paul, West St. Paul, and Inver Grove Heights is eligible to establish the license reinstatement diversion pilot program within its city.

Subd. 3. Contract. Notwithstanding any law or ordinance to the contrary, an eligible city may contract with a third party to create and administer the diversion program.

Subd. 4. Diversion of individual. A prosecutor for a participating city may determine whether to accept an individual for diversion, and in doing so shall consider:

(1) whether the individual has a record of driving without a valid license or other criminal record, or has previously participated in a diversion program;

(2) the strength of the evidence against the individual, along with any mitigating factors; and

(3) the apparent ability and willingness of the individual to participate in the diversion program and comply with its requirements.

Subd. 5. **Diversion driver's license.** (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the commissioner of public safety may issue a diversion driver's license to a person who is a participant in a pilot program for diversion, following receipt of an application and payment of:

(1) the reinstatement fee under Minnesota Statutes, section 171.20, subdivision 4, by a participant whose driver's license has been suspended;

(2) the reinstatement fee under Minnesota Statutes, section 171.29, subdivision 2, paragraph (a), by a participant whose driver's license has been revoked under Minnesota Statutes, section 169.791; 169.797; or 171.17, subdivision 1, paragraph (a), clause (6); or

(3) the reinstatement fee under Minnesota Statutes, section 171.29, subdivision 2, paragraph (a), by a participant whose driver's license has been revoked under Minnesota Statutes, section 169A.52 or 169A.54. The reinstatement fee and surcharge, both of which are provided under Minnesota Statutes, section 171.29, subdivision 2, paragraph (b), also must be paid during the course of, and as a condition of, the diversion program.

The diversion driver's license may bear restrictions imposed by the commissioner suitable to the licensee's driving ability or other restrictions applicable to the licensee as the commissioner may determine to be appropriate to assure the safe operation of a motor vehicle by the licensee.

(b) Payments by participants in the diversion program of the reinstatement fee and surcharge under Minnesota Statutes, section 171.29, subdivision 2, paragraph (b), must be applied first toward payment of the reinstatement fee, and after the reinstatement fee has been fully paid, toward payment of the surcharge. Each payment that is applied toward the reinstatement fee must be credited as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 171.29, subdivision 2, paragraph (b), and each payment that is applied toward the surcharge must be credited as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 171.29, subdivision 2, paragraphs (c) and (d).

Subd. 6. **Components of program.** (a) At a minimum, the diversion program must require individuals to:

(1) successfully attend and complete, at the individual's expense, educational classes that provide, among other things, information on drivers' licensure;

(2) pay, according to a schedule approved by the prosecutor, all required fees, fines, and charges, including applicable statutory license reinstatement fees and costs of participation in the program;

(3) comply with all traffic laws; and

(4) demonstrate compliance with vehicle insurance requirements.

(b) An individual who is accepted into the pilot program is eligible to apply for a diversion driver's license.

Subd. 7. Termination of participation in diversion program. (a) An individual's participation in the diversion program may terminate when:

(1) during participation in the program, the individual is guilty of a moving traffic violation or failure to provide vehicle insurance;

(2) the third-party administrator of the diversion program informs the court and the commissioner of public safety that the individual is no longer satisfying the conditions of the diversion; or

(3) the third-party administrator informs the court, the prosecutor, and the commissioner of public safety that the individual has met all conditions of the diversion program, including, at a minimum, satisfactory fulfillment of the components in subdivision 6, whereupon the court shall dismiss the charge or the prosecutor shall decline to prosecute.

(b) Upon termination of an individual's participation in the diversion program, the commissioner shall cancel the individual's diversion driver's license.

(c) The original charge against the individual of violation of Minnesota Statutes, section 171.24, may be reinstated against an individual whose participation in the diversion program terminates under paragraph (a), clause (1) or (2).

(d) The commissioner shall reinstate the driver's license of an individual whose participation in the diversion program terminates under paragraph (a), clause (3).

Subd. 8. Report. (a) By February 1, 2011, the commissioner of public safety and each eligible city that participates in the diversion program shall report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over transportation and the judiciary concerning the results of the program. The report must include, without limitation, the effect of the program on:

(1) recidivism rates for participants in the diversion pilot program;

(2) the number of unlicensed drivers who continue to drive in violation of Minnesota Statutes, section 171.24;

(3) payment of the fees and fines collected in the diversion pilot program to cities, counties, and the state;

(4) educational support provided to participants in the diversion pilot program; and

4.1 (5) the total number of participants in the diversion pilot program and the number of
4.2 participants who have terminated from the pilot program under subdivision 7, paragraph
4.3 (a), clauses (1) to (3).

4.4 (b) The report must include recommendations regarding the future of the program
4.5 and any necessary legislative changes.

4.6 Subd. 9. **Sunset.** The pilot project under this section expires June 30, 2011.

4.7 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2009.